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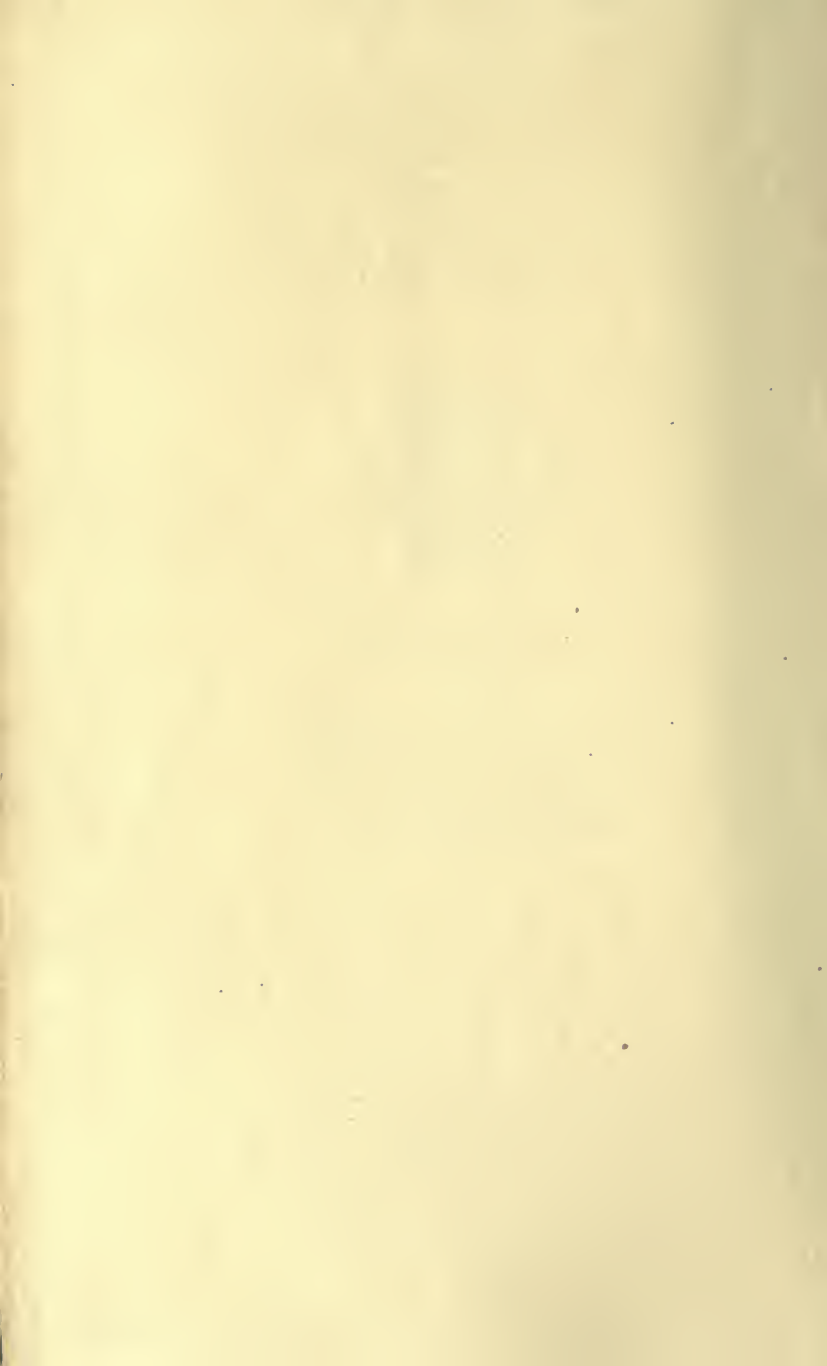


R. L. Gales



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BALLADS & CAROLS

BY

R. L. GALES



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BALLADS & CAROLS

BY
R. L. GALES



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TO
MARGOT ASQUITH

751844

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THE BALLAD OF THE ACE OF SPADES

A POOR wight sold his soul to the Devil,
And this was the covenant made,
He should spend his life in card-playing
And win where'er he played,
And ever should hold in sign thereof
The great Black Ace, the Spade.

He played and won, he got great wealth,
He ne'er was sad or sick,
He built his nest and feathered it
With feathers soft and thick
As a goose-down bed in a merchant's house
In the cold of Reikjavik.

He played and won, he played and won,
His winnings were untold,
All day long at the card-table
He sat and gathered gold,
He carried it away in bags
More than his hands could hold.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

The neighbours that called their souls their own
They sat with him and played,
They turned up the trump, Heart, Diamond,
Club,
And it on the table laid,
But that poor wight that was sold to the Devil
Turned ever the great Black Spade.

The Spade that told him of his doom
Became to him pain and grief,
To have turned up once the Knave of Diamonds
Would have brought him huge relief,
The Queen of Hearts in her honeysuckle bower
Or the Club like a shamrock leaf.

He rued him bitterly of his bargain,
And fear upon him fell
Of falling asleep in his big four-poster
And waking next morning in Hell ;
“ I will seek for a priest or a wise woman,”
He said, “ to break the spell.”

.

This poor wight then set forth on his travels
His last farewells all said,

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

And up and down the world he wandered
And ever at cards he played,
And ever he won and ever he held
The fated great Black Spade.

He played and won in every tavern
On high roads far from home,
He played with hermits, palmers, pilgrims,
Wherever he did roam,
He played tresette with the Holy Father
Beneath St. Peter's Dome.

He played with the Squire and his good lady
That was the joy of his life,
"Will you waddle, waddle, waddle?" the old
Squire said
As he sat and played with his wife;
He drank gin-and-water, he waddled and won
With a hand where spades were rife.

He played with the farmers on market-day
That were by the great storm stayed,
They had sold their wheat for a king's ransom,
And there in the inn they played;
They played from dinner until midnight
And he won with the great Black Spade.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

They played from midnight till the midday clock
In the sun was a golden flame,
The farmers played, they lost and won,
They played and thought no shame,
They took their winnings, they paid their loss,
For courtesy of the game.

But that poor wight that with them sat
Each rubber and game did win,
He paid the score for the old brown brandy
And the port from the mellowest bin ;
Each pocket and pouch were stuffed with gold
As he fared forth from the inn.

He played with gipsies and travelling tinkers,
At fairs and wakes he played,
He played with witches and wise women
And wizards who saw dismayed
They had no talisman or token
Against the great Black Spade.

He sat and played with the old sea-captains
And heard their tales of the seas,
He dined with them in a parlour at Bristol
On a whale's tail and green peas.
They played, and with the Ace of Spades
He beat them at his ease.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

He played with bandits of the Abruzzi
In their deep mountain den,
They played for gold and cut-throat plunder
And he won again and again,
Till they signed themselves and muttered their
prayers
Those wild, fierce brigand-men.

“Graziosissimo Padrone,”
The bandit captain said,
“I pay my debt, but I play no longer,
For, my faith, I am afraid ;
To pay my debt I am right willing,
But I fear the great Black Spade.”

In Seville, Cadiz, and Las Palmas
Hogsheads of sherry and sack,
Olives, oranges, Spanish onions,
He won to store and stack.
(Had they been the stakes he would have won
The signs of the Zodiac.)

To play with him great Spanish ladies
Stepped down from their high disdain,
They staked their fans and their mantillas,
Their lace, their pearls did he gain,

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

The daughter of Don Pedro y Pablo,
And the Infanta of Spain.

His way to Fez in Mogador
Across the desert he made,
There as with Christian men in Seville
With the Infidels he played,
But they no more than the Christian men
Could withstand the great Black Spade.

He played upon the Downs at Epsom
With players that there do meet,
He played with tricksters and card-sharpers
But him they could not cheat,
The thimble-riggers and horse-dealers
From the Black Spade did retreat.

He played with the vintner and the attorney
That were like body and soul,
And with their old crony, the notary-public
That played whether sick or whole,
He beat Robioglio, he beat Richietti,
He beat old Rigmarole.

He played in Provençe with Fédéri Mistral
By a wine-cask in the shade,

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

The cat and the dog in the poet's house
Watched breathless as they played ;
" Lagadigadoù," said that félibre,
" I salute the great Black Spade."

The têtes and pips, the pips and têtes,
They won for him renown,
Men stood agape to see him play
With courtier or with clown,
They sent for him to play at the castle
When he came to a town.

He played with the rich merchant's daughters,
With Gudula in her tower,
With Velleda in the mystic shade
Of her enchanted bower,
With Sister Lódola in the garden
When the sweet peas were in flower.

And then all up and down the land
With maidens fair he played,
With princess and lady of high degree,
With goose-girl and milkmaid,
But they no more than Pope or poacher
Could wrest from him the Spade.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

He played with the Grand Turk for his turban,
He played with the Dey of Algiers,
He played with pirates and sea-rovers,
Corsairs and buccaneers,
He played by land, he played by water,
Thro' the two hemispheres.

The days he spent at the card-table,
Good folk, I tell you true,
Sped fleetier than the dogs that run
For the Cup of Waterloo,
But when he stayed from the card-playing
Bitterly he did rue.

There was an old woman who lived in a tower
Alone with a little maid,
High in their tower, in their high tower,
For ever at cards they played ;
This poor wight came and joined their game,
But still he won with the Spade.

With all the town below them far,
In their high tower of stone,
Day after day, year after year,
They had played there all alone ;
They had played écarté, euchre, bézique,
Cribbage, piquet, Pope Joan.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

Hour after hour, day after day,
They played as in a trance,
Year out, year in, the falling cards
Whirled like the snowflakes' dance,
They changed and changed, they changed and
changed
With all the changes of chance.

Below in the city men fought in the street
And died at the barricade,
And kings were crowned and brides brought
home,
As now three, not two, they played,
And that poor wight that was sold to the Devil
Won still with the great Black Spade.

The twenty-four bells in the belfry hung
They filled the air with chimes,
That seemed to come from a world of shadows
Thro' happy or troubled times,
As they sat and played at games that changed
And came and went like rhymes.

Despairing he turned from that tower,
He bore upon his back
His winnings taken from that old woman,

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

Each gew-gaw and knick-knack,
Sugar-nippers, grape-scissors, asparagus-tongs,
All in a pedlar's pack.

As burdened he went thro' the crowded streets
To himself he murmured and said,
"What sibyl or saint can lift the load
That is upon me laid?
Who will deliver me from the curse
Of the Ace, the great Black Spade?"

.

To a good curé he told his tale
Before the Easter Feast,
That was wont to play cards with a poor leper,
The last of God's creatures and least,
To play cards with a leper whose face was half
eaten,
That charitable priest.

The leper was full of his foul disease,
His body each day did rot,
Men hid as it were their faces from him
And they esteemed him not,
But as he played with that good priest
His malady he forgot.

The Ballad of the Ace of Spades

The priest, the leper, the Devil's thrall,
They sat together and played,
But as the cards fell on the table
The spectre at last was laid,
The spell was broken—it was the priest
That held the great Black Spade.

With joy they rendered thanks to God
And Mary undefiled,
The leper rapt out of himself
Was of his care beguiled,
When, lo ! his flesh became again
As the flesh of a little child.

The Devil's thrall, now Christ's freeman,
For that the spell was broke,
Gave to the good priest all the winnings
He had gained beneath that yoke,
That he might build a lazar-house
For all poor smitten folk.

The Devil came then to claim his prey,
His debt due to be paid,
He saw the leper all white and ruddy,
He turned and shrank afraid,
And the good priest pinned to his tucked-in tail
The Ace, the great Black Spade.

THE GOOD KNIGHT AND THE ORPHAN MAID

(A Ballad of the Moyen Age)

“ SWEET maid, where may thy home
be ? ”
“ Fair sir, I roam in misery.”

“ Where may thy good father be ? ”

“ ’Neath the seas of Brittany.”

“ Where may thy dear mother be ? ”

“ Withered by a witch was she.”

“ Where may thy bold brother be ? ”

“ In the Turk’s captivity.”

“ Where may thy young sister be ? ”

“ On London Bridge in beggary.”

“ Where may thy grandfather be ? ”

“ He rows in the King’s galley.”

“ Where may thy grandmother be ? ”

“ She was burned for Lollardy.”

The Good Knight and Orphan Maid

“Where may thy true uncle be ? ”

“Gibbeted in chains is he.”

“Where may thy aunt Margot be ? ”

“Fast in Bedlam hostelry.”

“Where may the ballad-maker be ? ”

“On the high road in thievery.”

“Where may La Sœur Denise be ? ”

“They walled her up for apostasy.”

“Where may the tall Jacquot be ? ”

“Jacquot died in the Jacquerie.”

“Where may Marthe, thy playmate, be ? ”

“At the wars in harlotry.”

“Where may little Pierre be ? ”

“At La Vraye Croix thro’ charity.”

“Where may his baby-sister be ? ”

“She pined in the cold o’ February.”

“Where may thy kind cousin be ? ”

“He is sick of leprosy.”

The Good Knight and Orphan Maid

“Where may thy stepmother be ? ”

“In the deep of Purgatory.”

“Sweet maid, tell where thou wouldst be ? ”

“Fair sir, in thy company.”

(They ride off together.)

THE DEATH OF KING RICHARD THE SECOND

THE vane upon the turret 'when King
Richard woke
Glittered in the morning ' as his dooms-
day broke ;
Of fights and feasts and kisses, ' field and hall
and bower,
The lark sang to King Richard ' in his prison
tower.

In the March weather ' the world was growing
green,
Between the flying snow-showers ' glints of blue
were seen,
King and queen and valet ' all the dreary day,
One above them all ' King Richard did play.

He knew the change of fortune, ' he did not rail
on Fate,
He did not weep or wail ' a child disconsolate,
But meek as a wax image, ' cap and shoes and ring,
Beard and curls and cope, ' he stood a malkin
king.

Death of King Richard the Second

Into the arrased chamber 'came the murderers
at midnight,

They did their fell business 'by the candle-light,
In the free fields of Heaven 'all in white flower,
King Richard, smiling, saw 'far off his prison
tower.

A BALLAD OF DICK WHITTINGTON

DICK WHITTINGTON, the scullion lad
He ached in all his bones,
For the willow-dish he broke at Sext
They had beaten him at Nones,
He lay full-length upon the grass
And filled the air with moans.

Full sad was Dick on that June day
In time of cherry ripe,
The salt tears streamed adown his cheeks
So that his eyes to wipe
He from his hood of Lincoln green
Must twist the liripipe.

“There are seven days in the week,” said Dick,
“They beat me on each one,
From morn till night I am on my feet,
My work is never done ;
All night I shiver and shake with the cold,
All day I sweat in the sun.”

A Ballad of Dick Whittington

Now Dick in life had one delight,
And that it was his cat ;
To see her pounce upon a mouse
Or spring upon a rat,
He oft forgot his aches and pains
In marvelling thereat.

" I and my cat together," said Dick,
" Will into the wide world fare,
Lest toiling in this house and garden
I fall into despair ;
I will seek out some shipman bold
And sail my fate to dare.

" Here in the kitchen I'll stay no longer,
My cat and I will away ;
Last night the bells of St. Mary Redcliffe,
Strange things they seemed to say ;
I may be wed to come great princess,
By next year come to-day."

Dick and the cat with courage faced
The hazards of the sea,
They sailed in the good ship Minette
By help of Seynte Marie,
They saw strange shores and came at last
To a port of Barbary.

A Ballad of Dick Whittington

Now rats and mice devoured that land,
The harvests were laid waste,
The baked meats on the Sultan's table
Were by the mice defaced,
The Sultan's daughter from her bower
By great grey rats was chased.

Dick and the cat sprang on the quay
The cat made havoc then
Among the swarming mice until
The Moors they laughed again
And threw their turbans in the air,
Those grave and bearded men.

The Sultan walked amid the flowers
That blow at Whitsuntide,
The lilacs' white and purple plumes,
The peonies blood-red dyed,
The silver virginal white pinks
All in their feathered pride.

The Sultan walked in his pleasaunce
But in it took no joy,
Because the ruin of the realm
Did all his thoughts annoy ;
His vizier whispered him of Dick,
He bade them bring the boy.

A Ballad of Dick Whittington

He came to meet Dick Whittington
And reached to him his hand,
And bowing, as Dick bowed, he said,
“ Fair sir, I understand
That you have knowledge of remede
For the mice that mar the land.”

.

It was the Sultan's daughter
And she went like a queen,
The veil had fallen from her face
And her bright eyes were seen ;
She walked amid the asparagus beds,
The Lady Mousseline.

Now Dick in the kitchen had sometimes glanced
At a little cook-maid sweet,
As she made the orange pudding
Or stuffed the pigs' feet,
But his heart at sight of the Sultan's daughter
Full furiously did beat.

.

Among the mice in the great hall
The cat they set her free,
The Sultan sat among his lords
Her gambols for to see,

A Ballad of Dick Whittington

But Dick saw only the Sultan's daughter
That watched from the gallery.

All eyes save four were on the cat
As she went to and fro,
And in her deadly frolicking
The mice they were laid low ;
At last the Sultan summoned Dick
His pleasure for to know.

“ Fair sir,” he said, “ our thanks are due
For help in our great need,
From this sore plague and heavy pest
At last the land is freed ;
Choose now what gold or dignity
You will to be your meed.”

Now Dick went red and pale again,
But he made answer bold,
“ I ask of Your Sublimity
No dignity nor gold,
But your dear daughter as my sweet wife
Within my arms to hold.”

“ Good Master Richard Whittington,”
He said without a frown,

A Ballad of Dick Whittington

“ Right gladly would I give my daughter
To a man of your renown,
But you are of the Faith of Christ,
And we are of Mahoun.”

The Sultan's daughter it was that answered
Tho' she felt faint and sick ;
She said, “ When Jesu Christ shall come
To judge the dead and quick,
I'll stand in the same faith and law
On the Doomsday with Dick.”

The Sultan feigned a visage grim
And fiercely threatened he,
But for love of Dick and his dear daughter
He aided them to flee ;
With jewels worth the half his kingdom
That night they put to sea.

• • • • •
All dukes and lords held candles
At the bride's christening,
A great red Cardinal came from Rome
To bless the wedding-ring ;
Dick henceforth lived with his sweet wife
As happy as a king.

THE DOLEFUL DITTY OF CARDINAL LA BALUE

THE cardinals pace the marble floor
As free as larks that sing and soar ;
The splendid cardinals, each a king,
As free as larks that soar and sing ;
As free beneath their spacious dome
As swallows in the air of Rome ;
They know no care, they know no thrall,
Like butterflies in their vast hall ;
In that great space as free and gay
As painted butterflies are they ;
The scarlet cardinals, two by two ;—
But where is Cardinal la Balue ?

A captive in an iron cage,
He weeps, he cries for helpless rage ;
Within an iron cage he groans,
All day, all night, he sighs and moans ;
In misery on his iron bed
Against the bars he beats his head ;
He gnaws his lips, he tears his hair,
He feels a horrible despair ;

Doleful Ditty of Cardinal la Balue

All numbed and cramped without relief
He lies and aches for pain and grief ;
He cannot rise, he needs must lie,
A captive bird that may not fly ;
A captive bird, I tell you true,
At Loches is Cardinal la Balue.

BELLA ROSA

(*circa 1620*)

BELLA ROSA VAN DOSSELAERE

Her man killed in the Spanish wars,
Her brood flown and her home all broken,

Shelters behind the convent bars.

She has bread for daily needs

And a string of rosary beads ;

Striped and coloured like sea-shells

Of world's-end shores are the beads she tells,

Her great beads that she tells duly,

Cornelian, agate, lapis lazuli,

Coral, amber, aqua-marine,

Fit for the prayers of a Spanish queen ;

They seem amid the Aves' croon

Gems drawn by magic from the moon ;

On milk-white stones with rosy stains

She eases Purgatory pains ;

With Christe eleïsons that she says

She dulls the ache of dreary days.

Bella Rosa van Dosselaere

Weary of all beneath the stars

Lulls her pain with De Profundis

For her man killed in the Spanish wars.

THE PRINCE'S LULLABY

*(An old peasant-woman lulls the
Tsarevitch Alexis to sleep)*

SLEEP, Alechenka, on the soft pillows
Lay down at last thy tired little head,
On thy great bedstead all painted and
gilded,

Sleep, little Prince, 'neath the counterpane red ;
Have no fear, Alecha, sink into slumber,
Sleep, for the icons are all overhead.

.

Ivanoushka, Matoushka, all the kind faces,
Deep into dreamland will go with thee,
They will be with thee in wonderful places
That are hid in great woods or rise from the sea.

.

Sleep from the marvellous lands is coming,
He on his way already has sped,
Sleep that will lead thee to deeps below dreaming,
Quickly, dear Heart, he comes to thy bed,
Sleep that is sweeter than father or mother,
Honey or apples or home-made bread. . . .

PATIENCE

MADAME DE LA TOUR D'IVOIRE
In her rose-red robe
Sits all day at the card-table
And plays the Patience of Job.

Her mate, Monsieur le Capitaine,
To the wars has gone ;
All day long at the card-table
She sits and plays alone.

White before the game be done
Will be her gold head ;
One day at the card-table
They will find her dead.

AS GHOSTS MAY WALK

AS ghosts may walk on August nights
Of lavender and dew,
As ghosts may walk at Peacock
Place

Thro' alleys of clipped yew,
As ghosts may walk in Picardy
The sleeping streets of Rue,

As ghosts may walk where in old days
They made so much ado,
As ghosts may walk that know no pain,
Dear love, I tell you true,
As ghosts may walk go up and down
My quiet thoughts of you.

THE FAIRY PIEWOMAN

IN the hot noon of Midsummer Day
The fairy piewoman goes her way.

The forest children know her well,
Deep in the wood they hear her bell.

“Who would be merry, who would be wise,
Let him taste my puddings and cakes and pies.

“Fresh from the oven are my hot cakes,
They melt in the mouth like creamy flakes.

“My dainty cakes are shaped like hearts,
There is pepper in my cream tarts.

“In my hidden palace come and dine
On tansy pudding and cowslip wine.”

Natasha, Petroushka, as she goes past,
They run from their hut and follow fast.

They follow until a hill they see,
All cypress and anise and barberry.

The Fairy Piewoman

They enter a palace fair and wide,
Hidden deep in the mountain-side.

A hundred years seems a moment there
Amid the blithe feasters that know no care.

There they eat as they rest from play
Honeycomb sprinkled with caraway.

The Midsummer Night like a moment has sped,
The children wake at home in bed.

There is a strange new light in their eyes,
They all their lives long will be merry and wise.

What they have seen they may not tell,
But their clothes are full of the cypress smell.

As the fairy piewoman goes her way
They listen and smile each Midsummer Day.

“GAY, GAY, UPON THE QUAY”

(An Old French Song)

“**W**HO is this that comes so late
O'er the bridge and to the gate ? ”
Gay gay, upon the quay,
With a gallant company.

“ 'Tis a noble cavalier
Who a bride is seeking here.”
Gay, gay, etc.

“ My lord, you must further ride,
Here you will not find a bride.”
Gay, gay, etc.

“ Sir, I heard the good folks tell
Three fair daughters with you dwell.”
Gay, gay, etc.

“ My lord, those who told it you
Told a tale that is not true.”
Gay, gay, etc.

“ Gay, Gay, Upon the Quay ”

“ Sir, ’tis time such talk were done,
Of fair daughters give me one.”

Gay, gay, etc.

“ My lord, for my daughter’s hand
Will you give her gold or land ? ”

Gay, gay, etc.

“ Sir, I will give gems and gold,
Riches more than may be told.”

Gay, gay, etc.

“ My lord, on your journey fare,
She for these things has no care.”

Gay, gay, etc.

“ Sir, to her my heart I give,
I for her will die or live.”

Gay, gay, etc.

“ My lord, you your truth have shown,
Choose the fairest for your own.”

Gay, gay, upon the quay,
With a gallant company.

THE SHIP OF ANGELS

A SHIP of Angels
Sails down the Milky Way,
A Ship of Light that makes the night
Brighter than midday—
Angels swift as swallows
And as peacocks gay,
Birds of a feather
Flocking together
In the kingfisher weather
Of Christmas Day.
The great Angels sing
But the little Angels play.
O'er the Ship they riot
Thro' the starry quiet,
All a-fire to land
On fair Bethlehem's strand,
For Earth now is Heaven,
And midwinter May :
" Adoro Te devote "
The heavenly people say.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

MAN and wife in the beginning
Lived in Eden without sinning,
Blissful, toiling not nor spinning

Long, long ago ;
Blithe were they till a dark hour
Struck the birds dumb in their bower,
Blight fell on the cherry-flower ;
Forth they must go.

Sadly forth from Eden faring,
Toil mid thorns and thistles sharing,
All the sons of Eve's child-bearing
Wandered in woe ;
Till the simple ones and wise
Found again lost Paradise
In a new-born Baby's Eyes
One night of snow.

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS RHYME

“ **M**ARY, Mary, the world's contrary,
How does your garden grow ? ”
“ With red, red roses and cloves
for posies ;
Outside is the deep snow.”

See-saw, she sold her bed,
She sold her bed, Marjory Daw,
The Infant lies on Marjory's bed
And not on the wet straw.

Baby, Baby Bunting,
St. Joseph's gone a-hunting,
He will bring a white doe-skin
To wrap the Little Jesus in.

“ Goosey, goosey gander,
Whither dost thou wander ? ”
“ In and out, and roundabout,
And in Our Lady's chamber,
There to see the good folk lost in their prayers
A-kneeling at the foot of the heavenly stairs.”

A Child's Christmas Rhyme

Sing a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye,
Four-and-twenty Angels
Coming from the sky ;
Now the sky is open,
The Angels all do sing ;
Here is merry music
For the little King.

Ride a cock-horse
To Bethlehem Cross
To see that fair Lady that is the World's Rose,
The rings on her fingers like jewels they shine,
The stars are all shining over the snows,
The stars all sing and the bells all ring,
She shall have music wherever she goes.

Old King Cole, that merry old soul,
Is here with fiddlers three,
They do desire to join the choir
Now making melody.

Little Jack Horner sits in a corner
Of that stable bare ;
Thro' all his years he'll say with tears
“ Dear God, that I was there ! ”

A Child's Christmas Rhyme

Little Bo-Peep she sought her sheep,
A weary way she trod,
Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep
And found the Lamb of God.

Little Boy Blue blows up his horn
(O all green meadows and vines and corn !)
But that Little Boy that keeps all the sheep
Does not waken from His sweet sleep.

Little Miss Muffet
Sits on a tuffet
Eating of curds and whey ;
An Angel says to her
“ Fear not, for sure,
For it is Christmas Day.”

THE CREATURES' NOWEL

WHERE Mary keeps her court
With the humble and the high,
The little dog has sport
For he is also by.

The creatures of the earth
They have great joy and mirth
On the night of the Great Birth.

The hedgehog and the hare
Are of that Birth aware,
Their timid footsteps go,
Quick, furtive, over the snow,
They come thro' the cold
The young Child to behold,
In the stable bare.

They have no fear there,
No hurt and no annoy,
But great bliss and joy
With the Baby Boy,
In that safe stable's shade
With none to make afraid,
To kill or to destroy.

The Creatures' Nowel

The lamb in his white fleece
Plays with the wolf in peace,
The leopard lies down with the kid
The ox and the ass they bid
The lion to share their straw ;
All creatures tame or wild
Are there with the Little Child ;
The ox says " moo " and the ass " hee-haw."

THE EPIPHANY COCK

THE thorn flowers in winter
As in mid-May ;
The cock crows at midnight
As at midday.

Thro' the world seeking
Go men most wise ;
They seek Wisdom,
The Quest's high prize,
They seek and find it
In a Child's Eyes.

Angels in the stable
Sing as in Heaven,
The cock on the hay-rack
Crows like seven.

They come with great clouds,
With wind and with rain,
Black friars and brown friars
And grey friars of Spain,

The Epiphany Cock

The tall young Princes,
The grave Grandees,
The bearded captains
That sail the seas.

They come without number,
The cave they fill,
They kneel in silence,
The cock crows still.

Their great torches
Shed a red light
On the thorn hedges
Flowering white.

Angels sing sweetly,
Without fear,
To the new lands
The cock crows clear.

The clouds are gilded
And all the throng
Breaks into a tumult
And rapture of song ;
The cock crows madly
The whole night long.

The Epiphany Cock

The cock the night thro'
Crows as at morn,
He cries "Có-có-ri-có,
Christ is born."

A KING-TIDE CAROL

TO worship the King there came three
 kings
 Thro' the snowy weather,
They wore their royal robes and rings,
Four kings together.

One was a warrior stout and strong,
One was a grey-beard mild,
One was a blackamoor in a red turban,
And they came to a little Child.

They came from far, they saw a star,
They followed where it went,
Gold, musk and myrrh all wrapped in silk,
They bore with kind intent.

Herod the king sent for those kings
For to inquire of them ;
He feared for his gown, his sceptre and crown,
In his court at Jerusalem.

A King-tide Carol

“ Where is He born that I may come
And worship Him also ? ”
In this disguise he did devise
That young Child to lay low.

The three kings came at last to the stable
Their carol for to sing,
They saw the young Child and His Mother
And there they worshipped the King.

“ Rise up, rise up, my merry men all,”
King Herod then did say,
“ In Bethlehem slay all young children,
So this Child ye may slay.”

An Angel appeared in a dream to Joseph
With peacock plumes and an alb of white,
“ Take the young Child and His Mother,” he
said,
“ God speed you in your flight.”

To Egypt Joseph hasted
By Nile-bank there to dwell,
The three kings sailed to their own countree,
Marvelling at what befell.

A King-tide Carol

Three kings, four kings, five kings here
In their histories do appear,
One King stronger is than seven
When that King is the Lord of Heaven.

MARY MALHEUREUSE

WEEPING, weeping all day long,
Too sore or sick for prayer or song,
Sits Mary Malheureuse ;

Her eyes are blinded with salt tears
There is no good nor joyful news
Can fall upon her ears ;
Her heart is sick her Son to see ;
In death no greater pain can be
For Mary Malheureuse ;
“ My death I died upon the Tree,”
Says Mary Malheureuse.

On the third day before the morn
Her Son comes from the grave new-born
To Mary Malheureuse ;

With His own hand He wipes her tears,
From His own lips the joyful news
Then falls upon her ears ;
Her heart stands still her Son to see,

Mary Malheureuse

In Heaven no greater joy can be

For Mary Malheureuse ;

“ For whom have I in Heaven but Thee ? ”

Says Mary Bienheureuse.

THE PASCHAL CANDLE

THIS is the Light before the sun
From which was kindled the solar fire,
This is the Flame to which all flames
run,

Seeking their Source and their Desire.
The sun blood-red or blinding white
Is but a spark of the Paschal Light.

Of a myriad mornings will remain
No single transient rosy stain ;
The terrible monarch of midday
Will utterly vanish from space away ;
The liquid ruby orb of eve
No visionary gleam will leave ;
But the Paschal Light will light the birth
Of the new heaven and the new earth.
This is the Light Perpetual
That on the Eternal World will fall.

The Candlemas Candle was frail and faint
In the trembling hands of the grey-beard saint ;
The Candlemas Candle was small and white
That gleams to-day as the Paschal Light—

The Paschal Candle

This is the Light of that awful One
That will put out the light of the sun,
But that Light to-day is kind and mild.
Soft April radiance undefiled.

It has kindled a twinkling flood
Of lights that dance and play,
Flames like flowers in a multitude,
Stars of the Milky Way,
Daffodils of a daffodil wood,
Candles of Candlemas Day,
Many-coloured as crocus-beds
Or fields of tulips in May.
They dance and twinkle every one,
They dance to-day with the dancing sun
In the Eternal Easter bright
They will twinkle, true light of the Paschal Light.

THE REFUGE

(Turris, Janua, Rosa, Stella)

ONCE an Ivory Tower
Sprang from the earth like a
flower ;
Soul, in the world's dark hour
Flee to the Ivory Tower.

Once a Heavenly Gate
Opened and changed man's fate ;
Soul, from lands desolate
Fare to the Heavenly Gate.

Once a Mystic Rose
Flowered in a world of woes ;
Soul, amid mortal throes
Hope in the Mystic Rose.

Once a Rose of the World
Petal by petal uncurled ;
Soul, by the torrent whirled
Joy in the Rose of the World

The Refuge

Once a Morning Star
Shone o'er dark vales afar ;
Soul, from the night of war
Turn to the Morning Star.

Once a Star of the Sea
Showed a fair Haven free ;
Soul, out of misery
Follow the Star of the Sea.

IN LACRIMARUM VALLE

(*Christmas, 1914*)

THE valley of the shadows tenebrous,
The valley of tears, the valley desolate
We tread where fiends of ravin and of
hate

Strike mortal cold to hearts most valorous ;
Mother, we cry to thee ; our need is great ;
To thee we send up voices clamorous ;
Bend pitying eyes upon our woeful state,
Mother of the Saviour, Mary Immaculate,
Mary Annunciate, Mary Dolorous,
Mary in Glory, pray thy Son for us,
That He send forth the Dove from Heaven's
gate

Into our wasted lands and devastate,
That He who is our Peace rule over us
In Peace that wars no more may desecrate.

TO WILLIAM II

YOU who sowed the seas with death and
filled the world with weeping,
You whose pride was glutted with an
unmeasured pain,
You who fired on drowning lads, threw bombs on
children sleeping,
You who wrecked the Rose of Reims, you who
sacked Louvain ;
Caitiff, you shall see ere your vile day is ended
Springing from the blood of these unnumbered
slain,
Europe's One Republic rise serene and splendid,
Happy lands and holy seas from Russia unto
Spain.

DIRÆ FACIES

THE Flemish carillon-towers are cracked
and scorched
As Hell's red fury round them flames
and hails ;

Into Ancona the drowned fisher-lads
From the Adriatic wrapped in sheets and sails
They bring from their mined boats ; the carnage
grows

Till the earth shudders and all Europe wails ;
Everywhere is the rustle of Death's wings.
To the mad despot as he cowers and quails
Appear the direful faces that portend
The imminent doom of Kaisers and of Kings,
And the Hohenzollerns' fated shameful end,
As the divine and popular will prevails,
And, loaded with the curses of mankind
They sink in the Bloody Sea, and all help fails.

IN THE BALKANS

IN the far savage country
Where he must go,
In the wild brigand country
He lies low,
In the cold cut-throat country
Under the snow.

Body and brain are broken
And lie with broken things ;
Draw close the curtains
Round the beds of kings,
Lest they wake with the cold o' winter nights
When the wind sings.

This boy lies frozen,
Caked with blood and mire,
The crows strip his flesh from his bones
To serve the kings' desire ;
The kings in winter
Nod and drink by the fire.

In the Balkans

This boy's agony
No tongue may tell ;
Ferdinand and Francis,
Wilhelm as well,
They will fall asleep on soft beds
And wake in Hell.

THE DEVIL'S DAY

THE Devil's kingdom is come,
 Ill is the news we tell,
 The Devil's will is done
On earth as it is in hell ;
He has us in his net,
We cannot break the spell.

The Devil's will is done,
There is none to say him nay,
The Devil's kingdom is come,
His poor thralls can but pray ;
We pray in the black midnight
To the Saints of the beautiful Day.

The Devil rides us down,
He treads us in the mire,
He is Prince of the Power of the air,
He has power over water and fire ;
We can but knock at the gate
Of the Inn of our Desire.

The Devil's Day

The Devil keeps his feast,
His court and kingdom and reign,
Our joy is hidden and changed
To sick and angry pain ;
Mary, Cause of our Joy,
Show us our joy again.

DARK BEFORE DAWN

BLACK are the skies overhead,
We see no token or sign,
Numberless are the dead,
Wormwood is all our wine,
Because of the salt tears shed
Sweet waters are turned to brine.

The minstrels make no mirth,
Shepherds and vine-dressers flee,
Desolate lies the earth,
There are no sails on the sea,
The earth is in pain with the birth
Of bitterest things to be.

.
Break thro' the dark, the heavy dark,
The deathly dark of night,
Diluculum, diluculum,
Dear dawn of our Delight,

Break thro' the dark and show to us
The hidden Heart of fire,
Diluculum, diluculum,
Dear dawn of our Desire.

Dark Before Dawn

Break thro' the dark and scatter far
All evil dreams away,
Diluculum, diluculum,
Dear dawn of our new Day.

DAYBREAK

THIS is earth's darkest hour
And blind unreason rules,
The lands lie prone beneath
The tragical tom-fools.

Yet upon men beguiled
That wander in dark ways,
There shall arise a light
Like the light of seven days.

The blinding light shall free
The peoples held in thrall,
In the day of the great slaughter
When the towers fall.

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